

WEEKLY.]

THE MUSICAL WORLD.

# The Musical World.

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The Examination for 1889 is fixed for April 9. The List of Pieces may now be obtained.

The Half Term will commence on February 20, 1889.

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## Special Notices.

CONCERT MANAGEMENT. Mr. Basil Tree (Successor to Mr. Ambrose Austin), St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, is open to undertake the management of Concerts.

CRYSTAL PALACE SATURDAY CONCERT, Feb. 9, at 3 o'clock. OTTO HEGNER, the Wonderchild Pianist, will play with CRYSTAL PALACE ORCHESTRA, Beethoven's Concerto, No. 3 in C minor, and the following solos:—Chant, Polonaise (Chopin Liszt), Gnomereigen (Liszt). The programme will also include overture to the new French opera, "Le Roi d'Ys" (S. Ilo), Symphony No. 8 in F, (Beethoven), and Overture "Rienzi" (Wagner). Vocalist, MISS EMILY SPADA. Conductor, MR. AUGUST MANNS. Seats, numbered 3/6 and 5/-, Unnumbered, 1/- and 2/6.

LONDON SYMPHONY CONCERTS.—Mr. HENSCHEL, Conductor.—WAGNER NIGHT.—NINTH CONCERT, ST. JAMES'S HALL, TUESDAY EVENING NEXT, FEB. 12, at 8.30. Programme: Prelude to "Lohe igrin" (Wagner—died Feb. 13, 1883); Sach's Monologue "Wahn Wahn," from "The Mastersingers of Nuremberg" (Wagner), sung by Mr. Henschel and kindly conducted by Mr. Hamish MacCunn; Symphony No. 3 in E flat, "Eroica" (Beethoven); Prelude to "Parsifal" (Wagner); "Good Friday's Spell," from "Parsifal" (Wagner); Prelude and Finale ("Isolden's Liebestod") from "Tristan and Isolde" (Wagner).—Reserved Seats, 7s. 6d. and 4s.; Unreserved Seats, 2s.; Admission, 1s.; of N. Vert; usual Agents; and St. James's Hall.—N. Vert, 6, Cork Street, W.

MR and Mrs. HENSCHEL will give TWO VOCAL RECITALS (positively the only two this season) at Princes' Hall, on Friday afternoons, Feb. 15 and 22, at 3. Tickets, 7s. 6d., 3s., and 1s., at the hall, and usual agents.—N. VERT, 6, Cork Street, W.

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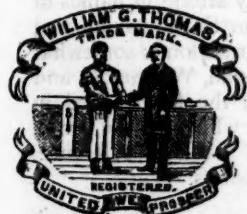
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## The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1889.

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\* \* Advertisements and business communications generally should be addressed to the Manager while the Proprietor's receipt will be the only recognised one for all payments. Advertising, Publishing, and General Offices: 138a, Strand, London.

## Facts and Comments.

That enlightened section of the "musical" public to which the prodigy is dear, and in whose estimation the artistic value of a performance is in inverse ratio to the performer's age, will doubtless be gratified to know that a children's symphony concert will shortly be given in New York. The performers will all be under the age of 12, and are now busily rehearsing at the Conservatory. It is true that we ourselves have listened to "toy" symphonies rendered by infants who attempted to imitate the voices of the turtle, the nightingale, and the cuckoo, joining thereto the plaintive strains of the domestic tin-whistle—things probably invented by the Father of Evil for the peculiar torment of musical critics; but for the progressive Yankee has been reserved the distinction of organising a children's symphony concert. But the Atlantic rolls between.

News of an important invention reaches us from Germany, which should be received with attention by those who play upon the violin. Hermann Ritter, the inventor of the "Viola alta" so common in German orchestras, has just patented a violin-bridge with three feet. Herr Ritter claims that, by this

simple alteration, the tension of the strings will be more evenly distributed, and increased sonority and brilliance imparted to the D and A strings. It remains for violinists to put this to the test.

The musical lecture is becoming more and more popular in America, the efforts of Messrs. Apthorp, Damrosch, Elson, and H. E. Krebiel especially being highly spoken of. The last named has recently published illustrations to the following:—Three lectures on the history of the pianoforte and its music: 1, "The Precursors of the Pianoforte;" 2, "The Development of the Sonata;" 3, "The Romantic and Latter-Day Schools." Two lectures on Richard Wagner and the regeneration of the lyric drama: 1, "Origin and Nature of the Lyric Drama;" 2, "Richard Wagner and his Art Work." One lecture on "Chinese Music and its Relation to the Antique Art." One lecture on "The Development of Musical Notation." Lectures in preparation: "How to Listen to Music," "Musical Education in Ancient Greece," the "Development of the Modern Orchestra."

So few persons know "how to listen to music," that we are inclined to regard the lecture so named as promising most in the way of results, for though, of course, some knowledge of the other subjects goes far towards the making of a good listener, the average amateur has an aggravating way of acquiring knowledge without applying it, a habit which lessons in listening should certainly tend to remove. Hundreds, however, not only do not know 'how' to listen, but are not even aware that listening is necessary. Having ears, they assume that the occupation of a seat in a concert-room will, as a matter of course, bring with it enjoyment of the music performed. They have not reflected on the difference between "to hear" (passive) and "to listen" (active), and, in consequence, appreciate quite naturally that which appeals most strongly to the senses and least to the intellect or the higher emotions.

There is something to be said on the other side, however. Those who seek relief from work or worry in the soothing or stimulating effects of music, would find little or none if compelled to follow a sonata or a symphony after the manner of musicians. This habit of listening must be acquired early if it is to be exercised without consciousness of effort. For general and intelligent appreciation of the best music, therefore, we must wait until musical education has become as common as "the three R's," or until the battle of life rages less fiercely than now—which will not be yet awhile.

It is asserted—we do not accurately know with what degree of authority—that Sir Arthur Sullivan has lodged a formal protest against the introduction of "The Lost Chord," in the form of a hornpipe, into the music of the Guards' burlesque of "Ivanhoe." The protest, it appears, has been efficacious, and Mr. Edward Solomon has removed the offending number.

The "Daily Telegraph" is not alone in the glory of a papal interview. Madame Emma Nevada, the American singer, whose appearance at the Norwich Festival of 1884 is still remembered, has been accorded a private interview with the Pope. A more striking instance could scarcely be supplied of the change which has come over the opinions of the world in regard to musicians. Of course, the fact that Madame Nevada is a member of the Romish Church is sufficient to account for the bestowal of an honour so unusual, as it could hardly be expected that the Holy Father should receive in private audience all the distinguished singers who might chance to pass through Rome. Moreover, Madame Nevada's conversion was accomplished with no small *éclat*, Gounod himself being her sponsor. But, indeed, this reception is a fact which needs no comment.

We have received a copy of a work entitled "Musicians of all Times," by Mr. David Baptie. This is a very comprehensive dictionary of musical biography, in which, by a liberal use of many, and sometimes rather strange, abbreviations, room has been found for the names of some ten or twelve thousand persons more or less entitled to be called musicians. Mr. Baptie's principle of selection is by no means severe, and it is likely that by the time the next edition is called for, it will be found practicable to omit some hundreds of names as no longer of interest. But since, as a rule, only one or two lines are allotted to each name, it would perhaps be hard to grudge even the most insignificant this small share of fame. As regards the details given, which simply include the dates of birth and death, and (in an abbreviated form) the line of artistic work in which each person distinguished himself, we find the author, as a rule, industrious and accurate. We know of no English work at once so comprehensive and so accurate; but the small space allotted to each name makes it impossible to give any details. It is indeed a work of reference simply, and of the barest kind, but well up to date; for we find here the names of Hanish MacCunn, G. J. Bennett, and Richard Strauss. On the other hand we miss those of H. V. Herzogenberg, Karl Nawratil, Noskowski, Paderewski, P. A. Heise, and Rob Fuchs. Mr. Baptie is especially strong in names of Bohemian composers, and rather weak in Scandinavian and Russian, with reference to whom his information is somewhat behindhand. Thus he describes the Russian, Warlamoff, and the Swede, Udden, as "contemp," though the former died in 1849, and the latter in 1868. But on the whole we can praise the work as likely to be a very useful book of reference. Messrs. J. Curwen and Sons are the publishers.

Sweden is rightly anxious to honour the memory of her greatest singer, Jenny Lind. A new street in Stockholm has been named after the *diva*, and a Swedish sculptor has but recently completed a statuette which represents her as "Norma."

The ways of the censor in Russia are peculiar. They are, indeed, peculiar everywhere, but a story recently to hand concerning Rubinstein's opera, "Le Marchant Kalaschnikow," seems to illustrate the special eccentricities of the Slavonic ecclesiastic mind. The opera in question was played twice, about nine years since, and then, for some reason unknown, was shelved. A short time ago, however, the Czar himself expressed a wish to hear the work again, and it was put in rehearsal at the Théâtre Marie. To the ecclesiastic censors the work seemed noxious, and was accordingly interdicted. So singular a step aroused the ire of composer and interpreters who went forthwith to the Czar himself, and represented the censor's action to the august person who had ordered the performance. He, caring little for the prohibition, determined to examine and judge the work for himself, and ordered a performance, at which he was the sole spectator. He was unable to discover wherein consisted the harmful influence of the work, and accordingly a public performance of it took place on Jan. 22, when Rubinstein's music was received with much enthusiasm. So the censor has, for once, wielded his abhorred shears in vain.

#### LIVERPOOL.

"THE STAR OF THE NORTH," AND "THE DREAM OF JUBAL."

Anglicised under the above title, re-arranged specially so far as dramatic action is concerned by Mr. Carl Rosa and Mr. Frank W. Pratt, the latter of whom has also added some new dialogue and lyrics in place of much of the tiresome original recitative, Meyerbeer's "L'Etoile du Nord" was produced for the first time under the Carl Rosa management at the Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool,

on Friday last before an audience whose volume was only exceeded by its enthusiasm. When the masterful composer of "The Huguenots" determined to fight the French writers with their own weapons, and decided upon Scribe's dramatic story of the loves of Peter the Great and Catherine as his basis, he produced a work which proved his powers in the style of opera comique as conclusively as did "The Huguenots" in the grandest vein. Not only does the vocal music overflow with melody and humorous grace, which has unquestionably been drawn upon by later and lesser writers of opera bouffe, but it has, when required, a dignity and breadth, *sui generis*, and an ingenuity in its concerted and choral numbers which is beyond the powers of mere skill, and is undoubtedly the product of genius. Equally fanciful, and just as pleasing, are the orchestral conceptions and originalities, and although there is visible at times that desire for clap-trap display which was equally noticeable in "Robert the Devil," and other of his works, it is present in so slight a degree in the work under notice that it serves mainly the purpose of magnifying the brilliancy of the musicianly portions. The excisions, which have been made in the score by Mr. Rosa and his able first lieutenant, Mr. Goossens, serve further to attune it to modern tastes, while the spectacular display, for which Meyerbeer usually provided opportunity, is another link in the chain which will bind the revived and re-dressed work to the hearts of opera goers. Based largely upon historical or semi-historical incident, the scene in the first act is placed at Vyborg, on the shores of the Gulf of Finland, at the period shortly anterior to the battle of Pultowa against Charles XII. of Sweden. Here the great Czar, as a carpenter, gains the love of Catherine, the village cantinière, but, called away to action, loses sight of her, while she, disguising herself for love of her brother who is drawn as a conscript on the very morn of his marriage, sails away to the seat of war, where in the midst of the Russian camp, we next find her on sentry duty. Here she gains information of a plot against the Czar, whom she recognises; carousing, disguised as an officer, with a Vivandière. Enraged at this she is goaded into striking a superior officer, and is, by the drunken Czar, who fails to recognise her, condemned to death. She confides the particulars of the plot to a friend for conveyance to Peter, and escapes from her captors though wounded in the exploit; the act closes with the sobering of Peter, the disclosure of his identity to the traitors, and the gathering of his soldiers round him to strike a final blow for Fatherland. Peter is next found as victor in his palace at St. Petersburg but his gloom at the loss of Catherine, whom no efforts have traced, has absorbed him in melancholy, and his only diversion is in the exercise of his artisan skill in the erection, with the aid of native workmen, in his grounds of a copy of the village where he had met his fate. At length, among some visitors to the Finnish workpeople, come the brother and sister of Catherine, with the unhappy, and now demented girl, in their charge. No scientific aid restores her, and Peter, as a last expedient, determines upon reviving her earlier memories by reproducing the happy incidents of her village life, which by the aid of the workmen and the fruit of their toil, he is able to do, and the scene closes with the restoration of Catherine's reason and her investment with the royal robes in the midst of the assembled nobles. Those whose knowledge of opera dates back a decade will not be able to conceive the magnificence of the setting of these incidents, the scenic art of Mr. Robson presenting a delightful series of stage pictures, while the managerial skill of Mr. Rosa has produced groupings which vie with the best amongst all the spectacular marvels of recent memory. The second act, with its huge army, in the glittering, brilliant, and diversified uniforms of the period, contrasting admirably with the barbaric picturesqueness of the dresses of the Tartar regiments and the smartness of the *vivandières* and the host of drummers, forms a remarkably beautiful display. The final tableaux, as the relief regiments dash down the heights led by their bands, and as the cannon are rushed forward while the soldiers form in battle array to the music of a fierce chorus, interrupted by the booming of the heavy guns, form a climax capable of disturbing the utmost *sang froid*. In the cast were Madame Georgina Burns, as Catherine; Miss Amanda Fabris, as Prascovia; Miss Kate Drew, as Ekimona; Miss Presano, as Natalie; Mr. Charles Manners, as Peter; Mr. John Child, as Danilowitz and Mr. Aynsley Cook, as Gritzenko. Madame Burns sang all her numbers with that delightful freshness and freedom for which she is famed, and Miss Amanda Fabris, had she not already won the hearts of the local music lovers, would have done so by her delightful method, brilliant execution and dramatic capability in the

second soprano part. Mr. Manners, though not dramatically perfect, was a thoroughly acceptable Peter, the difficult tent scene in the second act being done admirably, and Mr. John Child added to his reputation by his appearance and rendering of the somewhat thankless part of the pastry-cook Colonel-Danilowicz. Mr. Aynsley Cook's Gritzenko was a clever character study; equally thoughtful in its working out was Mr. Esmonds' George Skavronski, while the *vivandières* of Mesdames Drew and Presano added grace to an unusually excellent initial production. Mr. Goossens, directing as usual with artistic enthusiasm and calm judgment had of course spared no pains with chorus and orchestra, who kept pace in excellence with the principals, and the favour of the reception may finally be gauged from the announcement that the opera is to be played thrice weekly during the ensuing three weeks of the season.

Of interest equal to the production of Meyerbeer's work was the first performance of Dr. Mackenzie's new cantata "The Dream of Jubal," which was given by the Philharmonic Society on Tuesday. As London musicians will shortly have an opportunity of forming an opinion on the merits of the work, it would scarcely be desirable to enter into lengthened criticism of it now. We may, however, properly record the excellence of the performance, and the enthusiasm with which the work was received. The principal solo work fell to the share of Miss Macintyre and Mr. Lloyd, who sang admirably in their respective parts; while Miss Ella Russell and Mr. J. R. Alsop did not less well in the quartet of the "Gloria." Mr. Charles Fry recited the blank verse, which forms so large a portion of the work, with entirely adequate dramatic force, and the Philharmonic chorus and band were admirable. At the close of the performance, Dr. Mackenzie was greeted with tumultuous applause.

### THE "C MINOR" SYMPHONY.

By G. W. L. MARSHALL-HALL.

#### SECTION I.

(Continued from page 70.)

In considering where, and to what degree, this modification of *tempo* may be admitted, the character of the various passages must be taken into account. Where the effect of the music is produced chiefly by rhythm, as in the first fifty-five bars of this movement, the conductor's whole attention must be directed to the means by which such rhythm may be made most clearly perceptible—regularity of *tempo* and firm accentuation. Where, however, the actual melody, beauty of tone, and contrast of interval—the full development of which belong more to the *adagio*—characterise the passages, every laxity by which these can be more fully developed is allowable, such as slightly lengthening or accenting any particular note, and modifying the degree of tone and duration according to the relative importance of such. For, it must be remembered, hardly any two consecutive notes can ever be of the same loudness in music any more than in speech; nor can it be insisted on too often that, tone-poetry being but an extension of the emotional side of speech, the laws which govern the latter also apply, in a modified form, to the former. Every conductor should be at heart a singer, and well instructed in the shamefully neglected art of declamation. Beethoven was the first to systematically introduce the *adagio* character of theme into the *allegro*, and he who imagines that this genius neglected to mark the relative importance of each individual note in his various works from any other reason than because he believed that all musicians were not pedantic automatons, but men of flesh and blood, of soul—should seek an outlet for his genius in the only instrument capable of giving it full scope—the barrel organ.

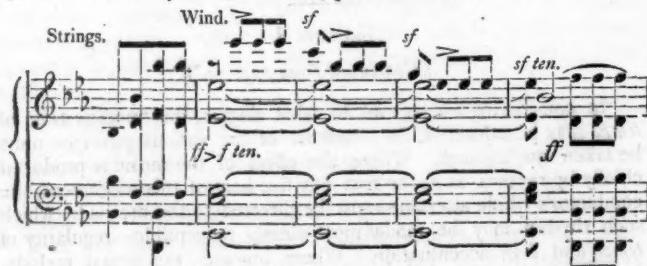
Nor does the continuation of this passage (bar 75) require any less attentive rendering:—



The D flat of bar 2 naturally becoming hardly perceptibly accented and extended, while at bar 3 the C must slightly predominate over

the other notes of the group. Nevertheless the first note of this bar must be sufficiently accented to make it known as the commencement of the phrase. At bar 83 the momentarily relaxed *tempo* must begin to re-assert itself, becoming restored at the *ff*, which should be held on without decrease of tone by every instrument. At this bar (No. 94) the helplessness which cast around despairing, yearning glances, as though hoping to find some sympathetic response, is changed to firm resolution. "Where, where," the music seemed to say (at bar 75), "shall I find what may fulfil this mighty impulse (mark well the shock given with ever increasing force by the basses at bars 77, 81, 84-93) within me—how find a tongue of such eloquence as shall persuade these, my poor purblind brother-mortals, to turn their eyes heavenwards, to this all-glorious prospect, and in the joy of that sight to forget for a while the earth-cares and quibbles with which they ceaselessly torment themselves? I look around beseechingly, but they pass me by; I fain would cry to them, but can force no sound from my sterile lips."

But this time (bar 94) a firm determination seems to possess him, as if he be thought himself, "Now I understand that it is vain for me to seek from *without* that which my *innermost being* alone can supply. Henceforth, what few feeble words lie within me I will strive to forge, in the furnace of my soul, into heart-conquering weapons." And ever those imperious tones seem to spur him on (bar 110). How seldom are these all-important wind-instrument passages distinctly given forth, owing partly to the enormous pace at which the movement is ordinarily scampered through, partly to the fact that conductors forget that the mass of strings in a modern orchestra must utterly overpower the small body of wind. In order to reap the full advantage in tone accruing from such an accumulation of strings, while preserving the effect of the wind passages, it will be necessary to cause the strings to drop from *ff* to *f* on the second quaver at bar 110, resuming the *ff* on the second quaver of bar 113, and again diminishing the tone to *f* on the second quaver of bar 114. Moreover, it is of the utmost importance that a firm accent should be laid on the initial beat of each bar wherever this theme, which derives its power from its rhythm and accent, predominates:—



For we must always be reminded of the original stern awakening (bars 1 and 2), where, for the sake of tremendous accentuation, a long sustained pause was introduced.

Then, with a full close, as though a definite resolve had filled and strengthened his heart, does genius boldly close this first chapter of his auto-biography.

(To be continued.)

#### WAGNER'S SPRING SONGS.

In all ages and in every clime poets have loved to sing of spring. There has probably been as much written about that season alone as about everything else in inanimate nature combined; and undoubtedly the enthusiasm and exhilaration of spring are emotions more generally felt than any other of our conscious or unconscious sympathies with our surroundings.

Our simpler forefathers regarded the miracle of returning life in trees and flowers with a reverence amounting to actual worship: theirs were the symbolical myths of life and death, and with them the returning health in spring of the Sun God was a veritable cause of triumph—the victory of good over evil, of light over darkness. But the simple faith of bygone ages gave place to the more self-conscious spirit of later days. Poets continued to write of spring, but ever in a more prosaic and conventional strain, till ballad-

mongery of the following description is only a slightly exaggerated specimen of an average spring-song:

O, love came in the spring time,  
And the spring time came with love,  
My heart was full of gladness,  
The sky was bright above.  
But in the dreary winter  
My darling passed away,  
So fleeting was my rapture,  
E'en as the flowers o. May!

As our poets supply the atmosphere through which we view the world we live in, it was not wonderful that Charles Kingsley should see cause to lament that reverence for the miracle of spring was fast dying out. There are indeed still some true poems of spring; poems which breathe the very spirit of exhilaration which animates the birds and the laughing streams, poems which re-awaken our sympathies with the budding trees and the lengthening day—sympathies which have been dulled more by the deadening influence of uninspired poets than by our artificial life in cities.

Wagner has done notable work in re-awakening the sometime dormant spirit of love for spring; for beyond all question love for spring is a natural and innate emotion. He wrote four spring songs, and, as in all his writings, each is written with nobler intentions than the last. The later work does not detract from the earlier, but it is simply to be judged from a higher stand-point.

In "Tannhäuser" is his first reference to the season of spring. Tannhäuser has lingered long in the vicious atmosphere of the Venusberg, a slave to the goddess' charm; but his purer, truer nature re-asserts itself and he laments:

"The time that here I sojourn I cannot rightly measure! Morning, evening, come to me no more. The sun no longer shines upon me, ne'er do I see the friendly face of heaven: no more can I behold the fresh'ning verdure that early summer brings; the nightingale hear I no more, recording spring's awak'ning! Never shall I hear, ne'er shall I see these more!"

Then follows the struggle in his heart between the thrall of his passion and his newly-awakened nobler impulses. The struggle is terrible; Venus uses the alternating threats and caresses of the subtlest tempter; she appeals to Tannhäuser's pride, love, gratitude, and at last attempts to make him despair of obtaining pardon—in vain, he will depart; but, she says, "Led by the magic of my love, bowed down, despised, thou wilt return . . . Ah, ne'er wilt thou return to me! Ne'er wilt thou seek me! Ah! if it should be so, my curse, my curse on ev'ry child of man! For love's delights unblest, unlov'd to languish, his world he desert and his heroes base!"

The scene suddenly changes to a beautiful valley bathed in sunshine. Sheep-bells are sounding in the distance. It is spring time, and a shepherd is playing on his pipe, and singing between-whiles his happy, simple song of spring, while there is a very breath of pure air in the music. A free translation of the song is here given:—

"Dame Holda came from her mountain home  
To burst the fetters that bound us,  
And as she through the meadows did roam  
Sweet music awoke around us.  
I sank then in the sweetest dreams,  
While on me fell the sun's bright beams;  
I woke with joy repeating,  
'Tis May, 'tis May, give greeting!  
Now on my pipe I gaily play  
For May is here, the lovely May!"

What wonder that the impulsive sensitive Tannhäuser, suddenly transported to a scene of such peace, is overwhelmed by a perfect agony of repentance; feeling that humiliation, no penance can be too great to gain his absolution, that he may once more be in unity with the spirit of calm happiness he sees around him.

Wagner's next spring songs are in "Die Walküre" and "Die Meistersinger." They may be bracketed together, for their elevation of thought is equal, and the period of their production is the same, though in other points they have little in common; but in both of them Spring and Love are brought together with the deepest passion and tenderness. Siegmund's spring-song is as irresistible as is the first breath of spring itself; in the music one hears the fresh flow of life and movement after the ice-bound silence. There is something remarkably happy in the whole plan of this scene. At the beginning of the act Siegmund is driven to seek shelter in the hut by the violence of the storm raging without,

But the hearer is soon absorbed in the events taking place within, and so forgets to heed the condition of the weather. Meanwhile, the last winter storm has passed, and spring has come. Suddenly the lovers, thinking only of each other, are startled by the outer door flying open. Then follows the lovely scene, truly "the union of love and spring."

Sieglinde exclaims "Ha, who went out, who passed in?" (The door at the back has flown wide open, and remains so: outside is a lovely spring night; the full moon shines in and throws its bright light on the pair, so that they can suddenly see each other distinctly.) Siegmund (in gentle transport.) "No one went out, but some one came in: see, spring's smiles fill the room!" Then follows the beautiful lyric:—"Winter tempests yield to the soft May moon, through the tender light the spring shines; weaving wonders, he rides on the balmy breezes, mild and sweet; over wood and meadow his breath goes forth; his eyes, open wide, are laughing. In the blissful song of birds sweetly he is heard, loveliest scents he exhales; from his warm life-blood beauteous flowers blossom; shoot and bud spring forth by his power. With gentle control he sways the world; winter and storm yield to his strong sway: so, at his resistless touch the hard door gave way, that, strong and stubborn, had held us apart from him."

Equally happy is the occasion of the spring song in "Die Meistersinger." Walter von Stolzing wishes to join the guild of Mastersingers, because the father of the girl he loves has promised her in marriage to the singer belonging to that guild who shall obtain the prize in the forthcoming contest of song. He has heard hastily recounted the arbitrary and senseless rules to which he is expected to conform in the extempore composition that is to be his test song; and before the formidable array of masters, having said "For thee, beloved, be it done," he awaits his judgment—he, the true poet, to be measured by the rules of common craftsmen, to be measured, and, of course, found wanting.

And here a difficulty faces those who would render the idea of this song in English. The marker shouts "Fanget an," of which the English equivalent is "Begin"—a command calculated to strike nervousness and alarm in any ordinary breast, but Walther, with ready inspiration, seizes the most prosaic and unpromising command, and makes it the key-note of his poem. "Fanget an," he repeats, "So cries the spring in the wood" and "So was the call to me in my breast when yet I knew not love." But how to translate that "Fanget an?" The English version in existence has simply "Now begin," which does very well for the marker's command, but scarcely fulfils Walther's larger requirements. "Break forth" in song, or into life, would, on the other hand, convey Walther's meaning, but not the marker's. If "sing up" were not so vulgarised an expression it would, perhaps, have been most suitable for the double use, but the difficulty will probably remain an insurmountable one to the translator.

Wagner has written one more spring-song, nobler, sublimer than the others. The spring song, or, as it is called, "Good Friday's spell," in "Parsifal" is closely associated with the mingled love, holiness, compassion and suffering which fill the drama; and yet through it there runs a vein of pastoral simplicity so pure and childlike that Spring can never be regarded with indifference again by those who have once seen it by the light of "Parsifal." It becomes a type of the reconciliation of Heaven and Earth, a re-awakening of hope, faith and love—love even for the smallest shoot and the tiniest flower.

Though it is only when taken in connection with the rest of the work, especially with the sufferings of Amfortas and his yearning for a holy death, that this scene can be fully understood, yet something of its inexpressibly tender beauty must come to light, even without the music and in a literal translation.

Parsifal gazes in rapt delight on the beauteous scene, and says: "How lovely, methinks, are the meadows to-day! I have seen magic flowers that twined around me to my hurt; yet I never saw the tendrils so sweet and tender, budding and blossoming. Yet all smells so pure and childlike, and speaks with such loving tenderness to me."

Gurnemanz.—This is Good Friday's magic, sir.

Parsifal.—Alas, the day of fiercest agony! Should not all that blooms and breathes, lives and comes to life, rather mourn, ah, and weep?

Gurnemanz.—Thou seest it is not so. It is the sinner's tears of penitence which to-day with holy dew fall on field and mead and

thus make them bloom. Now all living things rejoice at the blessed trace of the Redeemer and will lift glad prayers to Him. Him they cannot gaze up to on the Cross, so they look upon redeemed man freed from the weight of sin and horror, through God's sacrifice of love, pure and holy. Thus every blade and twig on the mead feels that man's foot will not tread it down to-day; that even as, with heavenly forbearance God had mercy on him and suffered for him, so man, in tender reverence, will spare them with soft tread. All nature then gives thanks, all things that bloom and quickly die; for redeemed nature now has regained its day of innocence.

When such varied and touching pictures of spring as those which Wagner has given to us are generally known and understood, there is little fear but that our reverence, for the re-awakening of nature will equal that which was felt by our forefathers. Though there will be less superstition in our reverence there will be more love, for it will be founded on maturer understanding and deeper—aye, and in the case of "Parsifal," even measureless—sympathy.

B. F. WYATT-SMITH.

## Foreign Notes.

"The Musikalische Wochenschrift" is our authority for stating that the performances to be given at Bayreuth this summer will be:—"Parsifal," nine times, "Die Meistersinger," eight times, and "Tristan," four times. Herr Levi, now happily recovered, will conduct the first work, Herr Richter, the second, and Herr Mottl the third. Herr Van Dyck has again been selected for the part of "Parsifal," in which he gave such satisfaction last year, and has accepted the engagement; and we are pleased to be able to add that Herr Plank, to whose serious illness we referred a week or two ago, has since so far recovered that it is permissible to hope that he will be able to resume his old parts. Altogether the prospect for Bayreuth this year seems very bright. It only remains to hope that the authorities on the spot will pay due attention to the hints that have been given them from so many quarters.

We regret to learn that Madame Sophie Menter is so seriously ill as to be obliged to give up all her engagements for the present.

The "Allgemeine Deutsche Tonkünstler-Versammlung" will hold its festival this year at Wiesbaden, June 27 and 30. Among the works to be performed will be Brahms's "Requiem," Berlioz's "Enfance du Christ," Wagner's "Liebesmahl der Apostel," and two works by Rich. Strauss, the Symphonic Fantasia, "Aus Italien," and a "Burleske," for piano and orchestra.

We read that the Czar has presented the Grand Theatre to the Conservatoire of S. Petersburg as a New Year's gift, together with a sum of two million roubles for its support. Perhaps some day we shall be able to announce that some Royal patron has bought Covent Garden or Drury Lane Theatre, and presented it to the country as a national opera-house. But it is to be feared that the day of such things is not yet.

Madame Materna has been received with the utmost enthusiasm at Amsterdam, where she sang, with the tenor Van Dyck, at the last concert of the "Wagner Verein." Madame Materna is declared by the critics of the Dutch capital to be the incarnation of a Wagnerian singer. Not the least interesting feature of the concert was the admirable performances of an amateur chorus of ladies, who executed some of the most difficult numbers from "Parsifal" with great effect.

The Viennese "Musikfreund" has recently elected M. Gounod and Madame Materna, as honorary members.

The well-known and influential Russian journal, "The Musical Review," has ceased to exist.

The committee charged with the direction of the festivities to be held at Genoa in 1892 in honour of Christopher Columbus, have definitely commissioned a work, bearing as title the name of the great navigator, of which Antonio Giulio Barrilo will supply the words, and Alberto Franchetti, the music.

Signor Luigi Mancinelli has recently completed at Madrid a new Symphonic poem entitled "Scene Veneziane." The work is divided into five parts, as follows: "Carnevale"; "The Declaration of Love"; "Flight of the Lovers to Chioggia"; "The Return in the Gondola"; "Marriage ceremony and nuptial dance." The work, which is highly spoken of by Spanish critics, will, we understand, be shortly heard in London.

Professor Joachim is now once again on a concert tour in his native land, Hungary, where he is always treated with the honours due to a man who has become a prophet in another country. The national mourning for the Crown Prince may, however, sadly interfere with the success of the tour, and the famous violinist is likely to return to our shores not much richer in laurels than he left us at the end of the last London season. On his arrival at Budapest, he related to one of our Magyar *confrères* a little London experience, which deserves repetition. One evening previous to proceeding to St. James's Hall he went to a hairdresser to have his *frisure* arranged. The zealous Figaro very much wished to cut the professor's hair rather short, to which, however, the latter objected. At last the indignant barber said: "Well, sir, if you as a gentleman don't mind being taken for a foreign musician, I don't!"

Eugene D'Albert has also been touring in Hungary, and achieved the greatest triumphs imaginable. The Hungarians are a musical people, and to meet with such unanimous favour at the hands of such competent critics must have been gratifying even to the difficult taste of our clever ex-countryman.

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MISS LUCILLE SAUNDERS.

OF the outward circumstances in the career of Miss Lucille Saunders, whose counterfeit presentment is to-day given to our readers, there is but little to say. She is one of the large crowd of American artists who throng our concert rooms; but the most patriotic of English musicians would find it hard to resent invasion by so charming a foe as Miss Saunders. She was born at Hartford, Connecticut, and though she received some musical education in her native town, it was not until she arrived in Paris, five or six years ago, that her musical career may be said properly to have commenced. In Paris she studied for two years and a half under Madame de La Grange, and came to London in 1886. In August of that year, Miss Saunders made her *début* at the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts, where the fashion in which she sang "O mio Fernando," proclaimed at once that a valuable addition had been made to the ranks of our concert singers. In 1887, Miss Saunders sang for seventeen nights at the season of Promenade Concerts given by Messrs. Van Biene and Mapleson at Her Majesty's Theatre. Since that time she has rapidly and steadily progressed in favour with London amateurs, until at the present time there are few drawing-rooms in which Miss Saunders' sympathetic mezzo-soprano voice has not been heard. Her reputation has been won chiefly as an exponent of the modern ballad; but it is understood that she proposes in the future to devote herself more exclusively to classic and oratorio music. Those who are acquainted with the refinement of her style, and the exquisitely emotional *timbre* of her voice, will feel the wisdom of this decision.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE.

A rumour is in circulation that THE MUSICAL WORLD is about to cease. We beg most emphatically to assure our readers that the paper was never more alive than now, and that there is not the remotest vestige of truth in the statement so maliciously promulgated. We can only suppose that the rumour has its origin in the fact that the company, who were lately its proprietors, are in voluntary liquidation.

## DAMON AND PHINTIAS.

Under this title Messrs. Novello have just published a new dramatic cantata by Mr. Ebenezer Prout, written for the Eglesfield Musical Society, and shortly to be produced by this body at Oxford. The cantata is for male voices only, and, therefore, adapted to the needs of societies which, like that in question, consist only of men. The story treated of is the old classic tradition of the friendship of Damon and Pythias, as many delight to call him. For some reason Mr. R. W. Bloor, the librettist, has chosen to reverse the historic order, for in the cantata, it is Phintias who is condemned to death, but is granted a respite of three days in order that he may go to "wed a sister" as the librettist lucidly remarks. However, there is here no particular ground of complaint; the reversal of the heroes' names would make but small difference to the artistic interest of the story, were the story itself told with adequate skill. As it is, Mr. Prout deserves sympathy for the difficulties added to his task by a librettist so lacking in dramatic strength or lyric sweetness as we fear Mr. Bloor must be adjudged to be.

The opening scene takes place in the palace of Dionysius, where a Chorus of Guards is uttering the praises of the tyrant, hailing him as the equal of Zeus. Phintias calls upon Zeus to avenge the blasphemy, and being seized by the soldiers, attempts to stab the King. For this he is condemned to death, but is granted a respite of three days for the purpose alluded to above, on the condition that Damon shall yield himself as hostage to be slain if his friend shall not have returned ere the third setting of the sun. Phintias sets out, the chorus meanwhile—in the irritating and depressing fashion peculiar to a chorus—assuring Damon that his friend will not return.

"His faith will be broken, his promise unkept,  
And thou, wretched Damon, must perish unwept."

So far, the most interesting number, musically considered, is undoubtedly the air allotted to Dionysius, "In the time that is past," to which the peculiar use of the augmented fifth imparts a dramatic harshness very characteristic. The second part shews us the city of Syracuse, on the evening of the third day, when Damon is being led forth to execution. The sun sinks, but Phintias has not appeared, and Damon prepares to die. He takes leave of the world in a song of considerable grace and beauty, although here again nothing but the skill of the composer redeems the bathos of the librettist. Hardly is the song ended, when Phintias is beheld rushing to the spot, with what strength is left him after a series of perils, which he presently recounts in a vigorous and well-conceived number. He claims his right to suffer in Damon's stead, although the appointed time has expired; and Dionysius, touched by the reciprocal devotion of the two, spares their lives, and—again to quote the words of Mr. Bloor—remarks :

"Tis mine the suppliant now to be,  
Come, let the band of love be three."

The chorus breaks into a hymn to Love, who is bidden to come "on his silver pennons," and the work ends.

To enter on any detailed analysis of the music would obviously be premature, but, as far as may be judged from the pianoforte score, the music is of a thoroughly English type in its sturdy directness and simplicity. The chorus with which the second part opens, "Now the sun hath risen thrice," is full of dramatic points and strength, while the final chorus, "O Love, thou breath of Heaven," is thoroughly Prout-esque in its solidity of scoring. It may, at any rate, be said with confidence that no little interest will attach to the first performance of this latest work from Mr. Prout's scholarly pen: and with not less certainty may it be anticipated that the verdict passed on it, when it shall have been heard under proper conditions, will be that it is worthy of its composer.

## Correspondence.

## TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

DEAR SIR,—With reference to the interesting Tristan and Isolde discussion, it seems to me that Mr. John Marshall-Hall's temperately stated objections have not been met by Mr. Parker or Mr. Barry. They were:—(1) If the love-potion be used to take away the *will* of the lovers, the whole plot becomes an absurdity; and (2) If this

be not so, then Wagner has committed one of two errors; either (a) By exalting as a hero a degraded being, who, suffering no remorse for having betrayed his friend, is deaf to the dictates of honour; or (b) By dwelling on the beauty and intensity of the love between the two, he has neglected to show the reverse side of the picture, the fearful remorse any honourable man would feel at having betrayed his dearest friend. The object of art being to educate,\* a dramatist must not shew the delightful side of wrong-doing and obscure the punishment which it brings on itself. As Goethe says: "Alles Schuld rächt sich auf erde."

I have the following suggestions to make. With Mr. Parker I take the love-potion to be symbolical. Apparently at the point of death, Tristan and Isolde declare their love. At that very moment King Marke arrives: there is then no opportunity for explanation. Act II. *Isolde and Marke are not yet married*; she is in fact living alone with her maid, and in all probability the time is adjacent to that in Act I. Tristan meets her; they are discovered by Marke, who reproaches Tristan with his treachery. Now notice. To Marke's question "The unexplained, unpenetrated cause of all these woes who will to us disclose?" Tristan raising his eyes compassionately to Marke replies, "O, monarch I may not tell thee truly; what thou dost ask remains for aye unanswered," and now, for the first time, his eyes are opened to his treachery. Hitherto so blinded has he been by love that it has never occurred to him. Instantly he resolves that the only atonement he can make is to give his own life. He turns to Isolde and asks, "Where Tristan now is going wilt thou, Isolde, follow?" then calling on Melot, his betrayer, to guard himself, he, letting his own sword fall, rushes on Melot's sword-point, thus redeeming his character as a hero.

I offer this as an explanation. Whether Wagner's own intentions are represented by it will probably be a matter of opinion.

Truly yours,

London, N.W., Feb. 6.

SIEGFRIED II.

## PROVINCIAL.

MANCHESTER, February 3.

The drawing-room concerts which are given in connection with the series of Gentlemen's Concerts occupy an important position in the musical life of Manchester, as they constitute almost our only systematic supply of good chamber music. At the concert given on Tuesday last the artists were Madame Neruda, Sir Charles Hallé, Herr Hess, Signor Risegari, and Herr Fuchs. Schumann's String Quartet in F major, Op. 41, No. 2, occupied the first place in the programme, and in many respects deservedly so. It is a fine example of the composer's genius, displaying the virile power, and the utter devotion to a lofty ideal which may ultimately make Schumann rank still higher than he has done hitherto amongst the master spirits of his art. Dvorak's Pianoforte Quintet (A major, Op. 81) is another composition of astonishing vitality, though widely different from the Schumann quartet. Here we find embodied the genius of a race rather than that of an individual, and the work might well have been written under the immediate inspiration of some national festival. Perhaps even Dvorak may have subordinated his own personality to an undue extent, for passages are not wanting in which he seems only to have escaped triviality by the extreme ingenuity of his treatment. But in spite of this it is all intensely interesting; and in the contrapuntal skill manifested, no less than in the almost orchestral effects obtained, we recognise one of the finest composers of this generation. Beethoven's sonata for violin and piano (A minor, Op. 23) was irreproachably played by Madame Neruda and Sir Charles Hallé; Madame Neruda also gave, with an unsurpassable *cantabile*, Mackenzie's "Benedictus."

The first part of Sir Charles Hallé's fifteenth concert (January 31) was of a miscellaneous character, including Mendelssohn's "Reformation" symphony; the second was occupied by Verdi's "Requiem." A better performance of either of these it would be very difficult to secure; the orchestra and choir shewed everywhere a complete mastery over their work, and the result was a smoothness and perfection of ensemble that cannot be praised too highly. It only remains to say that the solos were equally satisfactory. Miss

\* This is matter for discussion. It is by no means certain.—[ED. M. W.]

Anna Williams and Mr. Lloyd are artists who always command success by deserving it, and their trying parts were given with the greatest care and with remarkable effect. We ought also to mention that in the first part Mr. Lloyd gave an extremely fine rendering of Gounod's "Lend me your aid." Madame Fonblanche and Mr. Gilbert Campbell made a highly favourable impression, Mr. Campbell in particular displaying talents which should ensure a successful career for him.

LEEDS, February 4.

From about the middle of December to the middle of January has been a period of absolute stagnation in the musical doings of Leeds, broken only on the 15th of the latter month, when Mr. Edgar Haddock gave one of his series of "Musical Evenings," the chief feature of which was a clever pianoforte and violin sonata in G minor written for the occasion by Mr. T. Kilvington Hattersley, Mus. Bac. This proved a work of great refinement, containing a large share of pleasing but dignified melody. The programme also included another novelty, in the shape of two violin solos, a minuet and gavotte, from the pen of Mr. W. W. Cook, one of the scholars of the Royal College of Music, both of which were graceful and musically trifles. At the following "Musical Evening," on January 28, Madlle. Jeanne Douste de Fortis was the pianist, and made an extremely favourable impression by the exquisite delicacy of touch, great command of the fingerboard, and artistic feeling displayed in her rendering of solos by Chopin, Rubinstein, Liszt, and Mendelssohn, whilst Mr. Haddock was heard at his best in an "Elegie" by Bazzini, and in Corelli's "Folies d'Espagne."

The fourth of the Subscription Concerts took place on the 30th, when a concession was made to the weaker members amongst the subscribers by providing a "miscellaneous" programme, given by Madame Minnie Hauk's concert-party. Madame Hauk, though on the concert platform she does not appear to such advantage as on the stage, sang very brilliantly in pieces from operas by Bizet, Thomas, and Massenet. Madame Belle Cole's extraordinarily rich and powerful contralto voice was much appreciated, though her selection of solos was not deserving of very warm commendation, and Messrs. Charles Banks and Arthur Oswald completed an exceptionally strong quartet, the excellence of whose ensemble was heard in the fine quartet from "Rigoletto," "Un di se ben." The two instrumentalists, M. Tivadar Nachéz and Herr Schönberger, were all that could be wished, and, indeed, created more enthusiasm than any other members of the party.

DUBLIN, Feb. 1, 1889.

There was not so large an audience on Wednesday evening to hear Otto Hegner as might have been expected; however, all the leading lights were in Leinster Hall, the result of the visit being columns of adulation in the papers yesterday. The performance certainly narrated a great amount of homage to the "Wonder child," but the abnormal use of superlatives becomes objectionable; decidedly so to the artist, although he must think it very "friendly" of his admirers to "drop into poetry" over him. The second and last concert takes place to-morrow afternoon.

On Monday next Mr. Gunn—the Dublin Augustus Druriolanus—will lay down a "thousand yards" of new carpet in Leinster Hall, and after a "thousand lamps" have been lit the first of three Promenade Concerts will take place, in what should be after this transformation a "hall of dazzling light." The principal performers announced are Miss Clara Leighton, Miss Jeanie Rosse, and Messrs. Frank Weston and Alfred McCreary. The assistance of several regimental bands has been obtained, but unfortunately there will be no strings.

The string quartet for the Royal Dublin Society Concert on Monday week will be Mendelssohn's, Op. 44, No. 2; Dvorak's Pianoforte Quintet in A, Op. 81, the performance of which should be one of the features of the present series of concerts, is also in rehearsal.

The Royal Irish Academy of Music gives on Tuesday a selection from Mendelssohn's "St. Paul." The Academy Choir—which is a very good one—of course will be responsible for the choruses, and for this occasion there will be a full orchestra, conducted by the Chevalier Martin Roeder. Herr Lauer, the Academy violin professor, will "lead," and Mr. George Newman will be responsible for the second violins. The directors of the Academy have made a very good arrangement, namely, to give to a limited number of students free

instruction on the principal orchestral wind instruments. This will seem a step in the right direction to all save those unreasonable "parents and guardians" who entertain objections to a trombone which is not answerable for its actions, disturbing them before they can find peace in the morning omnibus; it is a pity that the trombone and bassoon are too large to be practised with any comfort under the bed clothes; but there is always something to put with and even a budding genius on the trumpet must have his share of trouble.

BIRMINGHAM, February 7th, 1889.

After a month's total absence of musical events of any kind, we are now beginning to make ample amends for the valuable time lost, and every day brings something new in the shape of a Musical Entertainment. Among the minor but not the less enjoyable artistic concerts we may mention the weekly Smoking Concerts organised by the Clef Club. The programme for the season is well selected, and the performers are local professional musicians of high repute in their different spheres of action. Our best violinists, such as Messrs. F. Ward, T. M. Abbott and Herr Sück, our best violoncellists, Messrs. J. Owen and A. J. Priestly, may be reckoned among them. Pianists of greater or lesser worth in our midst are given an opportunity of displaying their talents. The vocal element also plays an important part—and we hear sometimes amateurs possessing capital voices and good schooling, but occasionally also, voiceless tenors and baritones, innocent of any training whatsoever. The Birmingham and Midland Musical Guild are doing their best to encourage local talent and giving young composers an opportunity of producing their works. On Saturday last, a member, Mr. A. E. Daniel, F.C.O., contributed an excellent MS. String Quartet, which was admirably played by Messrs. Ward, Priestly, Abbott and Owen. A new member, Mr. J. F. Davis, returned lately from the Brussels Conservatoire, who possesses considerable talent as a composer, contributed a "Mazurka Fantasie" for piano and violin, which was played by the composer and Herr Sück, a young Violinist who has lately settled in Birmingham and a pupil of Herr Hollander of the Cologne Conservatorium. The different local Musical Societies who cater for the artisan classes have begun their weekly Saturday night Concerts (Saturday being the popular night). Last Saturday the Birmingham Choral and Orchestral Association gave a performance of Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" with full band, chorus, organ and principals; on Saturday next another amateur body—The Midland Musical Association—will give a performance of the Messiah, with full band, chorus, organ and principals. These concerts are crowded in the extreme, hundreds not being able to gain admittance. Then we have the Birmingham Festival Choral Society, the Edgbaston Amateur Orchestral Union, who all in their turns help to give the long list of concerts. The Harrison Popu'ar Concerts, and Stockley's Orchestral Concerts, attract the élite of Birmingham Society. Last night our Town Hall was again crowded on the occasion of Messrs. Harrison's Third Concert of the series 1888-9. The chief attraction consisted in the first appearance here of the little Otto Hegner, the embryonic Maestro, who chose for his début in our city Bach's "Partita," Schumann's "Der Vogel als Prophet," Chopin's Nocturne in C Minor, also his Valse, Op. 34, No. 1, and one of the Rhapsodies of Liszt. It is almost futile to state with what enthusiasm he was greeted. His artistic conception is even in advance of that of little Hoffman, and his even and beautiful technique are simply astonishing. We shall be able to speak more fully of his remarkable capacity in the course of a fortnight, when he will give a pianoforte recital pure and simple at the Town Hall. Madame Nordica, Madame Patey, Mr. Orlando Harley, Signor Foli, Miss Marianne Eissler (violin), and Mr. Wilhelm Ganz (conductor) were the other artists who appeared last night. Madame Nordica, who is a great favourite here and elsewhere, delighted the vast audience by her admirable style of vocalisation, by her flexible and voluminous voice, and by her charming appearance. For fear of trespassing too much upon your space, it must suffice to say that all the artists were enthusiastically received and recalled, and their efforts were in conformity with their reputation. Mr. Max Pauer, the gifted pianoforte virtuoso, will give a pianoforte recital on Friday. It is his first appearance here, and he has issued an excellent programme.

## Concerts.

### LONDON SYMPHONY CONCERTS.

Tschaikowsky's "Solemn (and noisy) Overture, 1812," which was repeated "by desire" opened the eighth concert on Tuesday. Its excellent performance, due in part no doubt to increased familiarity, may be freely acknowledged; but the work itself, in spite of many excellent passages, still disappoints the critical hearer. It cannot be judged as abstract music, and as a picture of the event called up by the date of its title it must be pronounced sadly deficient in tragic power. Following the overture came Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto, the soloist being Mr. Max Pauer. His reading did not altogether meet our views. A tendency to make "points," and to indulge in liberties of time prompted apparently by the head rather than by the heart, detracted somewhat from a performance in many other respects of great excellence. We are anxious not to be ranked with those who regard as a guide the text rather than the spirit of Beethoven's music; but whilst freely recognising the duty of executants in this matter, let us not forget that there is a wide difference between revealing and bedecking. Schubert's divine fragment the "Unfinished" Symphony in B minor was on the whole well-played, and had Mr. Henschel allowed his orchestra to linger a little over the delicious phrases in the andante, the enjoyment of some his hearers would have been greater still. There was nothing to complain of, however, in the orchestral renderings of the remaining part of the programme, which included Saint-Saëns' clever "Danse Macabre," and Liszt's melodious Symphonic Poem, "Les Preludes." Next Tuesday, the eve of the anniversary of Wagner's death, a selection from the Bayreuth master's works, and the "Eroica" Symphony of Beethoven will be given.

### PORTMAN ROOMS.

The second and third acts of "Tristan and Isolde" were given on the 31st ult. and 4th inst. We have little to add to the remarks made last week. The absence of an orchestra was more evident during the performance of the second act than on the occasion of the first recital, the percussion inseparable from pianoforte playing being in part responsible. Miss Pauline Cramer was again an Isolde full of enthusiasm and power, and Miss Marguerite Hoare as Brangäne used her sweet voice with taste and skill; but the physical means of Mr. William Nicholl are scarcely equal to the demands made by such a part as that of Tristan, which is in more than one sense "heroic." Mr. B. H. Grove's delivery of King Marke's solo in the second act was a highly meritorious performance, and the artistic merit displayed by Mr. Wilfred Cunliffe in the part of Kurwenal was again noteworthy. Mr. Henry Phillips satisfied all reasonable requirements in the parts of Melot and a shepherd. Opinions naturally differ with regard to the artistic questions raised by these concert-room performances of Wagner's work; but in any case we do not think the reputation of the master can suffer thereby. That the rest matters little, his interpreters on this occasion would probably be the first to admit. The blame, if blame there be, attaches solely to those responsible for the recitals. Wagner's wonderful work remains uninjured, while to many its beauties are more apparent than before. And if the enormity of Mr. Armbruster's offence should stimulate some enterprising or enthusiastic capitalist to give an adequate performance of "Tristan and Isolde,"—stage, scenery, orchestra and all—there will be still less reason to deplore a desecration to which no less a person than Madame Wagner herself gave sanction.

### POPULAR CONCERTS.

Last Saturday's Concert was remarkable for a truly magnificent rendering of Schubert's Octet, perfect in every detail. The performers, led by Madame Neruda, were, with the addition of M. Ries as second violin, identical with those who gave a less entirely satisfactory reading of Beethoven's Septet a fortnight previously. The concert began

with one of Emanuel Bach's Violin and Pianoforte Sonatas (C minor) to which full justice was done by Sir Charles Hallé and Madame Neruda. The former chose as his solos, Chopin's Impromptu in F sharp, and Polonaise in F sharp minor, Op. 44. The Impromptu was, with very happy effect, taken at a somewhat slower pace than is usually adopted; and the Polonaise was given with the fullest appreciation of its poetical significance, the sadness of the close being especially insisted on.

One song only was given, Macfarren's "Pack clouds, away," sung in rather amateurish style, by Miss Kate Flinn, to the accompaniment of Mr. Naylor, and Mr. Lazarus's Clarinet Obligato.

Beethoven's Septet was doubtless responsible for the large audience of Monday, but the announcement that Mr. Max Pauer would play Schumann's Etudes Symphoniques was of far more interest to musicians. Mr. Pauer considerably added to his reputation by his performance of this magnificent work. It was not, it must be confessed, an ideally satisfactory one—in so young an artist, perhaps, this was hardly to be expected—but it was always characterised by the breadth and dignity of style and grasp of the composer's meaning, which this work of truly symphonic proportions requires in no ordinary degree. Judged from a strictly technical standpoint Mr. Pauer was not so successful, but the formidable difficulties with which he had to contend were perhaps a sufficient apology for occasional slips.

The rest of the programme may be dismissed in the briefest way. Haydn's Quartet in D minor, Op. 42, is one of the shortest and most genial of the master's compositions in this form; we cannot, however, congratulate Mme. Neruda and her coadjutors on a perfect rendering. On the other hand, the performance of the Septet was worthy of its distinguished exponents. The vocal element was supplied by Mdlle. Fillunger, an artist of considerable continental repute, who created a favourable impression in songs by Schumann and Brahms. A word of praise is also due to Mr. Sidney Naylor for his artistic accompaniment.

### THE ROYAL AMATEUR ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

This excellent society gave its first ladies' concert of the present year on Saturday night, when St. James's Hall was crowded to its utmost with the fair friends of the performers. The Royal amateurs, indeed, seem to enjoy an altogether unusual amount of feminine favour, beyond the respect properly due to those who give themselves seriously, though *en amateur*, to the practice and support of the divine art. And, indeed, the severest critic might well be appeased by the evident signs of sincerity and hard work on the part of the orchestra, so well directed by Mr. George Mount, which were so abundantly displayed by last Saturday's performance. The programme opened with Gounod's first Symphony, a work which, though it contains but little of the maturer Gounod, is yet so graceful and delicately scored that it may be heard with pleasure and interest. Its performance was an almost entirely satisfactory one, despite one or two slips. The second item of importance was Beethoven's "Leonora" Overture, No. 3, which served more than any other piece on the evening's programme to show the point of efficiency reached by the orchestra. To say that it was absolutely perfect would be untrue; but it certainly would be hard, if not impossible, to find any amateur society capable of performing it better. The propriety of giving the overture to "The Yeomen of the Guard" might, perhaps, be questioned; but there it was, and an excellent rendering of it was given. The soloists, both instrumental and vocal, were—perhaps as a concession to the audience of ladies—all of the feminine persuasion. The Misses Marianne and Clara Eissler were the undoubted successes of the evening. The first performed the "Rhapsodie Hongroise" by Hauser, with which she created such an impression at the second Patti concert. That success was now repeated, for her purity of tone, refinement of conception, and breadth of phrasing evoked the first genuine outburst of enthusiasm. As an encore the young lady

offered Schumann's "Traumerei," of which, however, her reading was somewhat too slow. Her sister played very admirably Thomas's "Autumn," demonstrating thereby the capacity of the harp as a solo instrument. The vocalists were Miss Douglas, an American lady, new to the English concert room, who gave a most artistic rendering of a Scena by Rubinstein, and was also heard in two new songs by Gustav Ernst; and Miss Van Heddeghem, who possesses a contralto voice of sympathetic quality, but of limited power and doubtful intonation.

At the smoking concert held at the Prince's Hall on Wednesday, the whole of the first part of the programme was devoted to the works of Sir Arthur Sullivan, including the incidental music to the "Merchant of Venice," capably played, the overture to "The Yeomen of the Guard," and "Di Ballo," and several songs admirably sung by Messrs. McKay and Brereton. The second part was of a miscellaneous character, the most interesting feature of which was the violin solo of Herr Hans Wessely, who played with the utmost refinement and grace a ballade and polonaise by Vieuxtemps. This young artist should have a brilliant future; his tone is not powerful, but it is of excellent quality, his intonation is almost irreproachable, and his phrasing most artistic. The band was also heard to advantage in Berlioz's "Carnaval Romain," Dvorak's "Slavische Tanze, No. 1," and an intermezzo "Naila" by Delibes.

#### MISCELLANEOUS CONCERTS.

EALING.—Sir Charles Halle and Madame Neruda gave a piano forte and violin recital at the Victoria Hall on the 30th ult. The programme consisted of the "Appassionata" Sonata, Max Bruch's Concerto in G minor, Schubert's Rondo brillante in B minor, a selection from Grieg's Op. 19, a "Reverie" and "Tarantelle" by

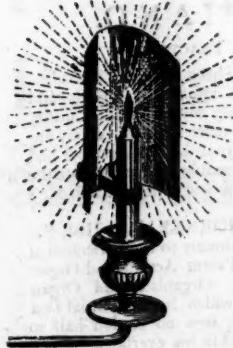
Vieuxtemps, and Schumann's Sonata in A minor, for pianoforte and violin. Concerning the performance of items so familiar, detailed comment is not necessary, but it may be stated that Sir Charles Halle gave a fine rendering of the Beethoven Sonata, and anywhere else the charm and brilliancy of Madame Neruda's almost perfect playing would have created a great effect. The fairly numerous audience was, however, somewhat cold, and only awoke once—after the Vieuxtemps pieces—to anything like enthusiasm. Is it to be inferred from this that the rest of the programme was over the heads of the listeners? This was the first occasion on which the recently opened Jubilee Hall had been used for musical purposes, and some anxiety was felt in regard to its acoustic properties. The result showed this to be needless, the building proving in this respect quite satisfactory.

MAIDENHEAD.—A highly successful concert was given here on Wednesday last, when an excellent programme was presented, and efficiently performed by Miss Amy Florence, Miss Annie Dwelley, Mr. W. Pearce, Mr. E. Barlow, and Herr Grevillius. Miss Ireda Marsden was the violinist, and Miss Ada Stanford the pianist.

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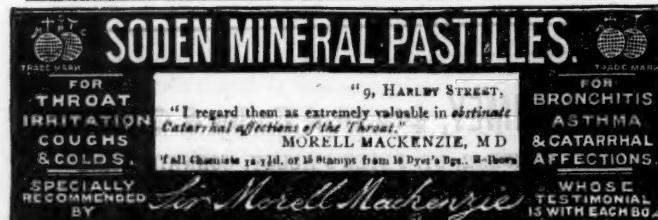
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